

U.S. Department of Education
2009 No Child Left Behind - Blue Ribbon Schools Program

Type of School: (Check all that apply) ☐ Elementary ☐ Middle ☒ High ☐ K-12 ☐ Other
☐ Charter ☐ Title I ☒ Magnet ☐ Choice

Name of Principal: Dr. Rhonda Taliaferro

Official School Name: Pittsburgh High School Creative & Performing Arts

School Mailing Address:
111 9th Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15222-3605

County: Allegheny County State School Code Number*: 102027451-00000713

Telephone: (412) 338-6100 Fax: (412) 338-6143

Web site/URL: http://www.pps.k12.pa.us/capa/site/default.asp E-mail: rtaliaferro1@pghboe.net

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent*: Mr. Mark Roosevelt

District Name: Pittsburgh School District Tel: (412) 622-3610

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Ms. Theresa Colaizzi

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date _____

**Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

Original signed cover sheet only should be mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as USPS Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, NCLB-Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, US Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 2008-2009 school year. AYP must be certified by the state and all appeals resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take the course.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2003.
6. The nominated school has not received the No Child Left Behind – Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, or 2008.
7. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
8. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
9. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
10. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT (Questions 1-2 not applicable to private schools)

1. Number of schools in the district:
- | | |
|-----------|---------------------|
| 39 | Elementary schools |
| 10 | Middle schools |
| 0 | Junior high schools |
| 12 | High schools |
| 4 | Other |
| 65 | TOTAL |

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: 19294

Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: 12050

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:

- ☒ Urban or large central city
☐ Suburban school with characteristics typical of an urban area
☐ Suburban
☐ Small city or town in a rural area
☐ Rural

4. 3 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.

 If fewer than three years, how long was the previous principal at this school?

5. Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school only:

| Grade | # of Males | # of Females | Grade Total | Grade | # of Males | # of Females | Grade Total |
|---------------------------------------|------------|--------------|-------------|-------|------------|--------------|-------------|
| PreK | | | 0 | 7 | | | 0 |
| K | | | 0 | 8 | | | 0 |
| 1 | | | 0 | 9 | 43 | 101 | 144 |
| 2 | | | 0 | 10 | 48 | 105 | 153 |
| 3 | | | 0 | 11 | 44 | 74 | 118 |
| 4 | | | 0 | 12 | 44 | 95 | 139 |
| 5 | | | 0 | Other | | | 0 |
| 6 | | | 0 | | | | |
| TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL | | | | | | | 554 |

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: _____ % American Indian or Alaska Native
 _____ 1 % Asian
 _____ 32 % Black or African American
 _____ 1 % Hispanic or Latino
 _____ % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 _____ 61 % White
 _____ 5 % Two or more races
 _____ **100 % Total**

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year: 3 %

This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

| | | |
|-----|--|-------|
| (1) | Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year. | 1 |
| (2) | Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year. | 13 |
| (3) | Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]. | 14 |
| (4) | Total number of students in the school as of October 1. | 554 |
| (5) | Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4). | 0.025 |
| (6) | Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100. | 2.527 |

8. Limited English proficient students in the school: 0 %

Total number limited English proficient 0

Number of languages represented: 0

Specify languages:

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 27 %

Total number students who qualify: 147

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-price school meals program, specify a more accurate estimate, tell why the school chose it, and explain how it arrived at this estimate.

10. Students receiving special education services: 4 %

Total Number of Students Served: 20

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <u>1</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>17</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>2</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>0</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Mental Retardation | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |
| <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities | <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed |

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

| | Number of Staff | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | <u>Full-Time</u> | <u>Part-Time</u> |
| Administrator(s) | <u>2</u> | <u>0</u> |
| Classroom teachers | <u>48</u> | <u>0</u> |
| Special resource teachers/specialists | <u>1</u> | <u>1</u> |
| Paraprofessionals | <u>1</u> | <u>0</u> |
| Support staff | <u>2</u> | <u>-9999</u> |
| Total number | <u>54</u> | <u>1</u> |

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 12 :1

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. Only middle and high schools need to supply dropout rates. Briefly explain in the Notes section any attendance rates under 95%, teacher turnover rates over 12%, or student dropout rates over 5%.

| | 2007-2008 | 2006-2007 | 2005-2006 | 2004-2005 | 2003-2004 |
|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Daily student attendance | 95% | 95% | 94% | 94% | 93% |
| Daily teacher attendance | 98% | 98% | 98% | 97% | 97% |
| Teacher turnover rate | 1% | 1% | 1% | 1% | 1% |
| Student dropout rate | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |

Please provide all explanations below.

The dropout rate for each year is less than 1%. For the following years the percentages are as follows:

07-08: .35%

06-07: .55%

05-06: .18%

04-05: .40%

04-04: .23%

14. For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools).

Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2008 are doing as of the Fall 2008.

| | | |
|--|------------|----------|
| Graduating class size | 132 | |
| Enrolled in a 4-year college or university | 85 | % |
| Enrolled in a community college | 10 | % |
| Enrolled in vocational training | 0 | % |
| Found employment | 0 | % |
| Military service | 0 | % |
| Other (travel, staying home, etc.) | 5 | % |
| Unknown | 0 | % |
| Total | 100 | % |

PART III - SUMMARY

The Pittsburgh High School for the Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA) is an arts magnet meeting the needs of all students in grades 9 - 12. CAPA began in 1981 as a part-time arts magnet where students studied dance, music, theatre, and visual arts. In 1983, the program expanded to include a class of full-time students taking all of their academic courses and arts courses in the same building. CAPA has grown beyond all expectations from a full-time population of 30 in 1983 to today's student body of 553 students.

The school offers six majors: dance, literary arts, music, theatre, visual arts, and vocal music. Students entering the program begin a rigorous, pre-conservatory arts program juxtaposed with a vertically aligned academic curricula designed by artists as well as academicians. Students study academics during the morning session and then enter the arts part of the day. Students receive three hours of arts study each afternoon five days a week. Each discipline offers students a uniquely designed course of study that meets the needs of that artistic form. The richness of the curricula, as well as the expertise of the artists with whom the students study, provides each student an arts education where artistic abilities shine and grow.

Located in the Cultural District of Pittsburgh, surrounded by cultural organizations and professional theatres, CAPA provides enhanced community collaborations. These collaborations include The Pittsburgh Symphony, The Pittsburgh Public Theatre, The Pittsburgh Opera, The Warhol Museum, The Young Playwrights of City Theatre and The Opera Theatre of Pittsburgh, providing experiences ranging from performances, master classes, as well as collaborations with their artists.

The faculty CAPA is comprised of many of the same artists with whom the students may collaborate at one of the professional organizations. Students receive large and small ensemble instruction, private lessons, as well as formal classroom instruction in their majors. Often, many students will perform alongside their instructors in school and within the community. The school's mission promotes collaboration as young artists develop and prepare to become world-class performers.

Academically, Pittsburgh CAPA has consistently made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and continues to rank in the top 10% in the state of Pennsylvania of standardized assessments (PSSA). In 2007-08, eleventh grade students scored 92.5% proficient or advanced in reading, 94% proficient and advanced in mathematics, and 100% proficient or advanced in writing. Additionally, African American students score 81.5% proficient or advanced in reading and 83.3 % proficient or advanced in math. This indicates that all of our students are not only prepared in their artistic endeavors, but in their academic studies as well.

Pittsburgh CAPA students excel because they are passionate learners and practitioners of artistic disciplines. The population is diverse including students from every neighborhood, all socio-economic levels, as well as being culturally diverse. Students find themselves interacting with people they may never have had the opportunity to meet, and with whom they learn on a daily basis, if it were not for the mission, and philosophy of the school. Students find a sense of themselves, as well as a sense of belonging to something greater when learning, interacting, and collaborating with fellow artists and mentors. Students learn to appreciate and share in the successes of their classmates and friends.

At Pittsburgh CAPA students come together to learn, grow, enjoy, belong, excel, and prepare to enter the post-secondary world. When students are given a choice about their educational goals, the arts afford them the opportunity to see these goals come to fruition. Pittsburgh CAPA is that school where excellence for all is the goal, and that goal is resoundingly met each year.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. **Assessment Results:**

We are a data driven school district. The 4Sight, a formative test, is administered to students 3 times a school year to help guide teacher instruction. The 4Sight is aligned with the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) Reading and Mathematics test, which students take in their junior year. A proficient score on the PSSA in reading, math, and writing is a graduation requirement. The Pennsylvania General Performance Level Descriptors, as developed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) and teacher panels, are given below.

Advanced: The Advanced Level reflects superior academic performance. Advanced work indicates an in-depth understanding and exemplary display of the skills included in the Pennsylvania Academic Content Standards.

Proficient: The Proficient Level reflects satisfactory academic performance. Proficient work indicates a solid understanding and adequate display of the skills included in the Pennsylvania Academic Content Standards.

Basic: The Basic Level reflects marginal academic performance. Basic work indicates a partial understanding and limited display of the skills included in the Pennsylvania Academic Content Standards. This work is approaching satisfactory performance, but has not been reached. There is a need for additional instructional opportunities and/or increased student academic commitment to achieve the Proficient Level.

Below Basic: The Below Basic Level reflects inadequate academic performance. Below Basic work indicates little understanding and minimal display of the skills included in the Pennsylvania Academic Content Standards. There is a major need for additional instructional opportunities and/or increased student academic commitment to achieve the Proficient Level.

(Chapter Twelve: Scaled Scores and Performance Levels 2007 PSSA Technical Report for Reading and Mathematics: Grades 3–8, and 11 Pages 128-129)

In 2008, CAPA 11th grade students obtained 100% proficiency on the writing portion of the PSSA. This assessment demands that students are proficient in the use of conventions and in writing an informative and a persuasive essay. Our overall performance is higher than the district average of 76% proficiency and higher than the state proficiency of 86%. The 2008 Writing score reveals a gradual growth over the past 5 years.

In reading, students performed above the district and state average on the reading exam with 56% advanced, 37% proficient and only 7% not proficient. These scores reflect growth the last 5 years with the exception of some slight fluctuation in proficient students year to year. The overall proficiency level, though has improved over that time period from 86% in 2004 to 93% in 2008. The only subgroup (African American) also displayed fluctuation over the past 5 years ranging from its lowest mark of 72% proficient in 2005 to its highest of 85% in 2006. The current year data shows a proficiency level of 81%.

A person not familiar with test scores would see an overall trend of improvement over the past 5 years in 11th grade reading proficiency. This person would also see an overall effort to reduce the achievement gap with the lowest disparity occurring in 2006 (5%). In 2008, CAPA achieved its highest mark in proficiency at almost 93% overall. The CAPA English team has developed an in-house plan to foster this level of achievement and surpass these scores on future assessments. They have also put into motion efforts to reduce the achievement gap now standing at 12% for 2008.

In 2008, CAPA 11th grade students reached 93% proficiency on the mathematics portion of the PSSA. This showed a growth of almost 17% since 2007 and 31% since 2004. This exceptional growth in overall performance was mirrored by the only subgroup, the African American students. These students achieved a proficiency level of 80% in 2008, an increase of 25% since 2007 and 35% since 2004. This growth over the past 5 years has been continuous with the largest jump in 2008.

A person not familiar with the test scores would see an overall trend of improvement over the past 5 years in 11th grade mathematics proficiency. The person would also see an effort to reduce the achievement gap with the lowest disparity occurring in 2008 (13%) down from 26% in 2006. In 2008, CAPA performed at its highest mark in proficiency at over 93% overall. The CAPA math team is also following a team-design plan to foster an increased level of achievement and surpass prior years' scores on future assessments. The team has also put into motion efforts to reduce the achievement gap.

All assessment data can be found at:

http://www.pde.state.pa.us/a_and_t/cwp/browse.asp?a=3&bc=0&c=27525&a_and_tNav=16331&a_and_tNav=

2. Using Assessment Results:

Formative and summative assessment data is used to understand and improve student achievement and thus school performance in a number of ways.

Formative data as provided by the 4Sight Pennsylvania Benchmark provides the information needed for remediation. This assessment is administered 3 times a year. The first test is administered in the fall. Although any teacher can access the results of the test, all teachers are presented with a general review of the data. During professional development, math and English teachers are provided with timely data for their individual students that reveal student growth in the eligible content areas. Teachers immediately analyze and interpret the data during professional development time. They begin by identifying strengths and problems. They then determine where eligible content is taught in the curriculum. Most importantly, the data reveal exactly which eligible content needs to be addressed for individual students. This provides the content teacher an opportunity to address these skills in focused one on one instruction or in focused homework. The data may also reveal that whole class remediation is necessary for mastering a skill. Remediation is also provided in the form of an after-school tutoring program, spiral review in the classroom and in morning tutoring sessions.

After the 2nd benchmark assessment is administered, 11th grade students who are identified as being at risk for not passing the PSSA are supported in a number of ways. In addition to individualized in-class instruction, students are actively recruited to attend after school instruction. Another technique is a pre-PSSA test mandatory ramp-up for skill building in both reading and math.

The final end of the year benchmark assessment is used to place students in appropriate fall classes. For example, if the data reveals that a student is not proficient, that student is placed in a class that will provide more instructional time. At CAPA, this means a yearlong course rather than a semester block schedule. Students demonstrating proficient and advanced skills are encouraged to take AP or other higher-level courses.

3. Communicating Assessment Results:

The Pittsburgh High School for the Creative and Performing Arts communicates student performance to the school community in a variety of ways. In our monthly parent newsletter, student performance and achievements are highlighted. This newsletter is mailed each month to CAPA families, district Board personnel, and to the Pittsburgh community at large. Daily performance and student achievement are noted in

the daily bulletin via email and announcement. The CAPA Chronicle, the school newspaper published quarterly, presents a cumulative list of student accomplishments and successes.

The Pittsburgh Public School District publishes annually by school and district wide the complete list of data from the PSSA, the state assessment. This information is presented to the media in a citywide press conference and published in local newspapers. PSSA results are mailed to parents from the school with a letter of explanation that outlines the individual score compared to school and district wide data. Parents are encouraged to call or conference with the literacy and math coaches for further explanation, if necessary.

At open house and during individual parent teacher conferences, parents meet and discuss with teachers one on one student progress. The conference centers on formative data including report card grades, 4Sight results, and curriculum benchmark results. Summative data, including PSSA results, are presented to parents in connection with the course of study, to inform parents of student progress and learning need.

As a staff, weekly professional development training is held with curriculum coaches, instructional teacher leaders, and content teachers to review, problem solve, and develop ways in which each teacher, content and arts area will address student need. Clear expectations and results regarding assessment data are shared with students in the classroom regularly by making the connection between eligible content and the assessment.

4. Sharing Success:

The Pittsburgh High School for the Creative and Performing Arts shares its monthly successes with other schools and the school community via the CAPA Parent Teacher Student Organization website at www.capapgh.org. The Pittsburgh Public Schools website: <http://www.pps/k12.pa.us/CAPA/site/DEFAULT.ASP/>, publishes all school district news.

Our daily bulletin and monthly student and parent newsletter highlight accomplishments, while the CAPA Connection keeps CAPA staff connected with news and mews. The Pittsburgh Post Gazette and Pittsburgh Tribune Review are most active in publishing current CAPA news about our students, staff, and parents.

At principal network meetings and general meetings school successes are shared and in the assistant superintendent's weekly communicator, schools beam with pride with accomplishments.

CAPA will be happy to be awarded Blue Ribbon School status and in the event that this good news occurs, CAPA will be highlighted everywhere!

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

The overall theme for the Pittsburgh Public Schools, Excellence For All, is a district reform agenda and a four year comprehensive framework for improvement. With the goal to improve teaching and learning for all students in grades 6-12 classrooms based on Pennsylvania State Standards, all core curriculum areas and classroom teaching is based on managed instruction that includes a consistent curriculum, proven pedagogy based on scientific practice, assessment and data use, and an accountability structure. The Institute For Learning at the University of Pittsburgh has articulated a framework, based on effort learning theory, ensuring that all students develop disciplinary literacy, or reading and writing skills, in mathematics, science, history, and English at the middle and high school levels through inquiry-based instruction. The teaching and learning feedback tool is used during classroom visitations and learning walks. The intent is to inform professional development training and ultimately, improvement in teaching and learning.

In English, the core curriculum in grades 9-12, engages students to learn by “doing in solo and group reading and writing experiences. Work and discussion serve as scaffolding and rigor for students who learn how to read for the gist, for significance, for interpretation of ideas, and to analyze the author’s methods.

The structure and routines in core literacy math lessons in algebra, geometry, and elementary functions for grades 9-12 engage students in the explore phase or private work time on concepts, small group problem solving and the analyze phase of the lesson where students compare solutions, share and model, focus the math learning on scaffolding to rigor, and reflect by engaging in a quick write of the process.

Science is inquiry-based where learners are engaged by scientifically oriented questions centering on objects, organisms, and events in the natural world in Biology, Chemistry, and Physics. Students engage and connect to the science concepts and empirical investigation which lead to gathering, using, and evaluating explanations described in the science and technology content standards.

In social studies and history, units of study are based in inquiry, framed by overarching questions where students engage in discussion, writing, and research. Students are asked to access prior knowledge, support interpretations with evidence, recognize differing perspectives, and analyze primary and secondary sources of information.

At CAPA, Spanish and French are offered to students in levels one through six. Using a conversation-based approach, students are introduced to the history, culture, and literature of the country.

Formative assessment exists in all core courses where students take the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) in reading, writing, math, and science in grade 11 as a summative exam. The state 4Sight exam, as a formative assessment tool, allows teachers to monitor data and student progress frequently in preparation for the PSSA.

Within the effort-based model embraced by the Pittsburgh Public School District, differentiated instruction is supported by teachers to provide academically rigorous instruction that is responsive to the differing needs of all students. The Center for Advanced Studies supports gifted students with rigorous accelerated curricula which includes preparation for AP exams.

As a magnet school for the creative and performing arts, students audition in one of six art forms: vocal and instrumental music, visual art, dance, theater, and literary arts. Instruction is delivered in solo, small group, studio, lab, ensemble and large group instruction. All art forms engage students in the disciplinary literacy

model according to the Institute for Learning, specifically in following the Principles of Learning through Accountable Talk in the service to the learning community, to accurate knowledge and to academic rigor. All students read and write in arts classes to reflect or respond to artwork.

2b. (Secondary Schools) English:

CAPA's English curriculum is based on the district's core curriculum, which includes mainstream and PSP (Pittsburgh Scholars Program) English. This curriculum includes instruction in reading, writing, and grammar, and provides each grade with multi-cultural literature selections. The core curriculum is designed around state standards for reading and writing, and implements the DL (Disciplinary Literacy) model for instruction. Speaking and listening skills are also emphasized, with activities for each imbedded in the individual units.

There is also a CAS (Centers for Advanced Studies) strand which has its own curriculum, based on the same state standards and eligible content as the core curriculum. CAPA also offers AP courses in 11th (AP Language and Composition) and 12th (AP Literature and Composition) grades.

Each classroom maintains student-writing portfolios, which reflect the culminating writing assignments for each literature unit. These portfolios provide the opportunity for both self-assessment and teacher assessment.

For 9th graders entering with basic or below basic reading skills, we offer a yearlong course designed to extend instruction. For students reading below grade level, we offer a course called Read 180, which is a research-based program designed to move students up to grade level. In the ensuing grades, teachers use data from the 4Sight Pennsylvania Benchmark program to target students who need remediation in specific skills. In addition, students with low skills are identified and encouraged to attend twice-weekly after-school tutoring sessions. All English teachers offer a 30-minute tutoring session each morning before first period.

All of CAPA's English instructors are NBPTS certified (one teacher is not yet eligible to apply for the program). All English classes take advantage of the students' interest in the arts, offering creative cross-curricular opportunities for students to combine English and the arts. English classes also take advantage of the school's location in the city's cultural district, and students attend opera, theater, dance, film, and symphony performances on a regular basis. Often, these directly relate to the literature being studied; for example, a 10th-grade English class studying *Billy Budd* was able to enhance their knowledge of the novel by attending the opera and by participating in an Opera Education workshop.

3. Additional Curriculum Area:

A strong arts education has proven to increase student achievement in academics and the quality of the arts programs at Pittsburgh CAPA is aligned with the overall mission and vision of not only the school but also the Pittsburgh Public School District.

In each art form, teacher artists strive for excellence in classrooms, and maintain the premise that all students can achieve at high levels in the arts. Each art program centers best practices in the arts that are student focused, well managed, and innovative. This ensures that all students are committed to excellence allowing them to succeed in both academic and artistic ambitions. Pittsburgh CAPA students are prepared for the next steps of their academic and artistic endeavors through the rich and varied experiences given them.

A good example of the correlation between the arts study and the academic study is the literary arts department. Within this art form students study all genres of writing. The curriculum of these courses is aligned with the State standards for reading and writing, supporting the students' preparation for the Pennsylvania State assessment, the PSSA.

The resources available to our teacher artists is top notch and the surrounding community as well as families work together to provide students the commitment needed to foster a nurturing artistic experience for all students. The teacher artists are highly specialized and trained in one or more aspects of their art form and make connections between the student's artistic training and the real world applications of this training.

The training Pittsburgh CAPA students receive in the arts is like no other in the Pittsburgh Public Schools. The breath of experiences our students receive in dance, music, writing, theatre, and art allows for a deeper understanding of their art form, themselves, and by extension the world at large.

4. Instructional Methods:

In reading and writing, the instruction of mandated core curriculum could be differentiated to address the diverse needs of students and all subgroups in a number of ways. To address the styles and needs of individual students, all lessons, materials, assignments and discussions can be adjusted. Tools in the Disciplinary Literacy (DL) Model include: reading to get the gist, rereading for significance, analyzing author's methods, and writing and answering inquiry based questions. A variety of instructional approaches including: inquiry, direct instruction, group lessons, modeling and guided reflection serve all students. After analyzing formative data, which allows the instructor to identify students who are not achieving at a proficient level, decisions can be made to determine which of these ways will best meet the needs of these students.

Other examples of differentiated instruction include individualized homework. Also, students can use the eligible content question stems to write their own inquiry-based questions. In small groups, they can write their own PSSA style questions based on what is currently being taught in the classroom. Based on data, students can also be assigned to work in groups that might allow them to work at their own pace. All of these strategies promote individualized instruction and remediation of deficient skills.

In literature classes, the mandated DL model of instruction supports both small and large group work. Teachers in all content areas use various approaches to learning such as visual, kinesthetic and auditory. Also, teachers use multiple forms of formal and informal assessment to guide instruction. The core curriculum is designed to provide scaffolding for mastery of knowledge, beginning with reading for the gist, rereading for significance, and building to interpretation and stylistic analysis. Finally, classroom libraries containing both classics and contemporary titles provide a variety of genres, reading levels, and areas of interest to meet the diverse needs of the students.

In mathematics, teachers are provided with a district-created, standard-focused curriculum in all core classes. It is the responsibility of the classroom instructor to differentiate their lessons to provide the best possible learning opportunities for all students. This differentiation is accomplished through individualized instructional plans, data-driven focus and student-centered classrooms. The teachers find support in professional development sessions that focus on curriculum implementation, data analysis, and best practice strategies.

CAPA uses a block semester schedule. However, students who need more instruction are scheduled into yearlong classes. Many students' needs are also addressed through every other day classes. This allows for more intense instruction and skill practice. Instruction is also differentiated through various levels of class instruction from basic to advanced learning, including AP classes.

Students with exceptionalities are taught through an inclusion program where the instructor uses the IEP to address the needs of the student. Frequent conferences with parents and a special education instructor guide the teaching of these students. The student can also take advantage of a pull out space for extra time, instruction or quiet.

5. Professional Development:

CAPA High School has in place a professional development plan for the entire staff. Assisting with the implementation of this professional development are administrators, instructional leaders, arts coordinators and curriculum coaches. Our district has established curriculum coaches in the building to support teachers in the areas of reading and mathematics. The curriculum coaches and teachers work together in a collegial manner to improve instructional practice, promote student achievement, and develop a mutually supportive learning community committed to professional growth. This is accomplished through small collaborative learning groups and consistent individualized teacher support. The coaches also assist teachers in implementing, enacting, and reflecting on rigorous, standards-based lessons, student work, and assessment data.

The overall goal of the curriculum coach is to assist teachers in improving knowledge, skill, and practice of teaching for the purposes of improving and enhancing student achievement. Weekly professional development provides awareness and opportunity to study new instructional techniques and curriculum. The best practices for curriculum implementation and instructional delivery are also addressed. Furthermore, coaches provide a model classroom to enhance and facilitate implementation of the core programs and curriculum. Follow-up occurs in the application phase as coaches observe teacher application of instructional strategies. These observations are followed up by conferences, using the teaching and learning feedback tool provided by the district. These observations are an important part of the professional development program and are supported by the principal. Our principal has established an accountability system that supports this content specific professional development provided by the coach and mandated by the district.

School wide professional development focuses on analyzing data, examining student work, implementing accountable talk techniques in the classroom and analyzing the use of rubrics. The teaching of writing and reading in all content areas is a focus of professional development which encourages our students to read and write across the curriculum. We believe this practice supports the eligible content and skills taught in English classes, resulting in a rise of PSSA scores. This is especially reflected in the writing scores mark of 100% proficiency in 2008. Reading and writing are also encouraged in the art content areas as teachers instruct students in reading and writing summaries of art articles and art related material. Writing skills are reinforced through assignments such as artist statements, written reviews of performances, and research papers. Professional development is provided to support this learning.

Coaches attend all district-mandated training sessions in order to learn district-wide initiatives that include and stress current knowledge of content, curriculum design and research-based instructional theory and practices. This information is then brought back to CAPA and becomes the primary focus of our professional development sessions. The school district also offers differentiated professional development opportunities for all instructors in all content areas.

6. School Leadership:

The leadership structure at the Pittsburgh High School for the Creative and Performing Arts consists of the principal, assistant principal, arts coordinators, content area chairpersons, counselors for regular education, and special education for gifted and learning support. Student Council and student leadership groups support student interest and growth.

Recognizing that collaborative leadership supports a climate of growth for students and teachers, most decisions that affect the achievement of students at CAPA are made by the school leadership team, the Instructional Cabinet. Arts coordinators are appointed by the principal, and content area instructional teacher leaders or ITL's, by school district and teacher federation bargaining agreement, are elected by their content area peers for a period of three years. The role of the Instructional Cabinet, comprised of all arts and content area chairs, special education, student support staff, building level federation representation, and

administration is to brainstorm, plan, problem solve, and make decisions to support instruction and student success at CAPA. Decisions of the Instructional Cabinet are informed by data from surveys and assessment results, and decided by consensus among the membership. All staff, students, and parents are invited to offer input and are informed of Cabinet decisions regarding instructional issues via email, student assemblies, and parent newsletters. School and district initiatives, the School Improvement Plan, student formative and summative assessment results, the district instructional delivery model, the school schedule and budget, the technology plan, open house experiences, school performances, and educational partnerships serve to stimulate and challenge Cabinet members in meetings every two weeks.

Arts coordinators and content area instructional teacher leaders meet and plan with their teacher teams weekly to discuss specific ways to support instruction and celebrate student success. The Student Council, student leadership groups, and grade level assemblies led by students and staff support student input and interests.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 11

Test: PSSA

Edition/Publication Year: 2007

Publisher: Data Recognition Corporation

| | 2007-2008 | 2006-2007 | 2005-2006 | 2004-2005 | 2003-2004 |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Testing Month | Mar | Mar | Mar | Mar | Mar |
| SCHOOL SCORES | | | | | |
| proficient/advanced | 93 | 76 | 69 | 64 | 62 |
| advanced | 41 | 43 | 41 | 33 | 31 |
| Number of students tested | 144 | 135 | 108 | 113 | 105 |
| Percent of total students tested | 100 | 99 | 97 | 100 | 100 |
| Number of students alternatively assessed | | | | | |
| Percent of students alternatively assessed | | | | | |
| SUBGROUP SCORES | | | | | |
| 1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students | | | | | |
| proficient/advanced | 85 | 56 | 48 | 36 | 42 |
| advanced | 33 | 24 | 28 | 14 | 5 |
| Number of students tested | 33 | 34 | 25 | 14 | 19 |
| 2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup): White | | | | | |
| proficient/advanced | 99 | 87 | 88 | 78 | 69 |
| advanced | 49 | 55 | 60 | 46 | 37 |
| Number of students tested | 90 | 86 | 60 | 67 | 71 |
| 3. (specify subgroup): African American | | | | | |
| proficient/advanced | 80 | 56 | 40 | 40 | 48 |
| advanced | 30 | 26 | 18 | 12 | 14 |
| Number of students tested | 46 | 43 | 40 | 43 | 29 |
| 4. (specify subgroup): | | | | | |
| % Proficient plus % Advanced | | | | | |
| % Proficient plus % Advanced | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |

Notes:

Subject: Reading
Edition/Publication Year: 2007

Grade: 11
Publisher: Data Recognition Corporation

Test: PSSA

| | 2007-2008 | 2006-2007 | 2005-2006 | 2004-2005 | 2003-2004 |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Testing Month | Mar | Mar | Mar | Mar | Mar |
| SCHOOL SCORES | | | | | |
| proficient/advanced | 92 | 88 | 90 | 85 | 86 |
| advanced | 56 | 53 | 59 | 44 | 48 |
| Number of students tested | 144 | 135 | 107 | 113 | 106 |
| Percent of total students tested | 100 | 99 | 96 | 100 | 100 |
| Number of students alternatively assessed | | | | | |
| Percent of students alternatively assessed | | | | | |
| SUBGROUP SCORES | | | | | |
| 1. Free and Reduced Lunch/Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Students | | | | | |
| proficient/advanced | 79 | 82 | 84 | 71 | 85 |
| advanced | 30 | 35 | 40 | 28 | 15 |
| Number of students tested | 33 | 34 | 25 | 14 | 20 |
| 2. Racial/Ethnic Group (specify subgroup): white | | | | | |
| proficient/advanced | 99 | 93 | 92 | 93 | 89 |
| advanced | 70 | 67 | 75 | 64 | 61 |
| Number of students tested | 90 | 86 | 60 | 67 | 71 |
| 3. (specify subgroup): African American | | | | | |
| proficient/advanced | 80 | 77 | 85 | 72 | 76 |
| advanced | 24 | 28 | 33 | 12 | 23 |
| Number of students tested | 46 | 43 | 39 | 43 | 30 |
| 4. (specify subgroup): | | | | | |
| % Proficient plus % Advanced | | | | | |
| % Proficient plus % Advanced | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |

Notes: